

## *Letters to the editor*

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### **Body**

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In an anxious world, all we need is love

Generation Anxiety?, Dec. 28

As the Toronto Star reports, and more broad contemporary narratives on mental health have espoused for some time, we are living in a generation where reported levels of anxiety are through the roof.

Struggle, though, is synonymous with living, especially at important moments of transition, such as graduating from university, building a family, caring for aging parents, etc. We need to look no further than to our inherited literatures, stories, ancestral teachings and, most importantly, to our own lives to realize that the existential struggles of life are significant and require strong family and community support to transcend.

I propose that it will embolden and strengthen young people's lives to normalize the phenomenon of anxiety, give these transitory moments an air of dignity and, of course, work as hard as we can as communities to advocate for support where it is needed.

Tarzan cannot swing from a moving tree, so let us not get too anxious about anxiety, and rather offer our children a message of hope, faith and love in order to help quell, well, their anxiety.

Mitchell Smolkin, registered psychotherapist, Toronto

'Climate emergency'

causes society to truly listen

Emergency, by any other word, Editorial, Dec. 31

Oxford Dictionaries made an excellent choice in selecting not one, but two words (climate emergency) as its word of the year for 2019.

The term "climate change" was always too milquetoast(y).

And the terms "climate action" and "climate strike" make us wonder. Are we to wait? Look for greater meaning first? "Eco-anxiety," "ecocide" and "existential" are over-the-top words for trying to show us what a people-less planet really means.

"Emergency," on the other hand, is a word that causes us to duck, or maybe stand at attention and listen. Even the most ardent denier of the fact that it's getting hotter and wetter here on Earth does understand the word "emergency."

Jack Drury, Toronto

## Letters to the editor

Let's keep up with our world, instead of the Kardashians

The decade when substance gave way to the superficial, Menon, Dec. 30

Sad to say there was very little that surprised me in this article. It is something that has been written about ad nauseam these past years, but it did cause me to pause and ask: Why?

Why the distraction? What is it we want to be distracted from? Why does the life of a bunch of mildly intelligent people known as the Kardashians hold such fascination for us? What exactly do they do for the betterment of humanity? Why have we become a people afraid to look at our own lives and, yet, willing to be so immersed into theirs? Are we possibly afraid that we don't measure up? Living an illusion that it is the likes of the Kardashians who have made it because they live an opulent, empty life of endless dribble.

Is this what it means to make it? That Kris Jenner, mother of Kylie Jenner gave her 22-month-old granddaughter Stormi a fully furnished play mansion complete with balcony and carport for Christmas at the cost of how many thousands of dollars.

Before we can seriously attack the likes of sustainable development and climate change, the rich-poor gap, the growing concerns of AI in our lives, status of women, clean water and so on, we need to be able to look deep into our own lives and ask the simple question: What do we want, not only for ourselves, but our children and our children's children? We need to get serious, like young Greta Thunberg, and say enough is enough and take our lives back from this endless stream of folly that the multinational media corporations are feeding us and give substance to our lives and not be mesmerized, hypnotized and polarized by the empty superficiality which they are so desperate to have us believe gives us purpose and meaning.

Matthew Marosszeky, Aurora

Protecting our water should be a government priority

Water is not a privilege. It is a right to all humans on this Earth, not just for the rich.

We need to protect our water and environment from corporations such as Nestlé. All the plastic from the water bottles is polluting our planet. We need to hold Nestlé accountable for its waste.

Our government needs to take a strong stand against corporations that are ruining our environment and threatening our very lives and generations to come.

Angela Smele, Brampton

In any car, near and far,

the traffic grinch looms

Unnecessary closing of lane snarled traffic over Christmas, Readers' letter, Dec. 29

I, like Bruce Hathaway, have had on occasion (actually, more than one) encountered the traffic grinch.

Several years ago, we went to Montreal for the August civic holiday weekend. On Saturday morning, we breezed to Montreal in less than five hours.

The return trip on Monday was an absolute nightmare. The 401 was down to one lane from Cornwall to just outside Oshawa. We also encountered the restricted areas and flashing lights, with nary a sighting of workers or any ongoing construction or road repairs. A trip that should have taken no more than 5-1/2 hours took us close to 12 hours! We left Montreal at 10 a.m. and got in our door just before 10 p.m.

## Letters to the editor

I have absolutely no issue with being inconvenienced by ongoing construction or road repairs. However, I seriously resent having to crawl from Cornwall to Thornhill because barriers are blocking all but one lane from Cornwall to Oshawa for no discernible reason.

At the time, I wrote to the Star asking them to investigate and also to MTO but, obviously, as evidenced by Hathaway's experience (and several other fiascos on our subsequent trips across the Province), my plea fell on deaf ears.

Rita Maio, Woodbridge

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